

# First Sunday of Advent - The Hanging of the Greens

The Hanging of the Greens is a service for the first Sunday in Advent. It is based on the English tradition of decorating the home with wreaths, garlands, a Christmas tree, and evergreens for Advent and Christmas. In a church setting, it readies the sanctuary (and church members) for the season.

## **Prelude**

### **Call to Worship**

How shall we prepare this house for the birth of Jesus?

**With branches of cedar, the tree of excellence and strength.**

How shall we prepare this house for the eternal Christ?

**With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, ever green.**

How shall we prepare this house for the prophet of Galilee?

**With wreaths of holly and ivy, telling of his passion, death and resurrection.**

How shall we prepare our hearts for this revelation of God?

**By hearing again the words of the prophets and the promises of God.**

For in the story of Jesus we see revealed the transforming power of God

We are reminded anew of God's vision

of wholeness, justice, and peace for all of creation.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Lighting the Advent Wreath – 1<sup>st</sup> Candle – Hope**

#### **Hymn # 198 - What Child is This**

#### **The Poinsettia**

#### **Special Music – Little Drummer Boy**

#### **The Meaning of the Service -- Why Advent?**

#### **Hymn # 175 – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel - vs. 1**

#### **Scripture Reading – Isaiah 60.2-3**

#### **The Meaning of Altar Candles**

#### **Hymn # 175 - O Come, O Come, Emmanuel- vs. 2**

#### **Explanation of the Advent Candles**

**In Unison:      Loving God, as we enter this Advent season,  
                         We open all the dark places in our lives and memories  
                         to the healing light of Christ.  
                         Show us the creative power of hope.  
                         Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
                         That we may walk in the light of Christ.**

#### **Hymn # 175 – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – vs. 3**

**God will send a righteous king – Jeremiah 23.5-6**

**Hymn # 175 - “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” - vs 4**

**The prophet declares a child will be born – Isaiah 9.2-7**

**“The Holly and the Ivy / O Christmas Tree”**

**Scripture – Isaiah 53.1-6**

**Blessing of the Chrismon Tree**

**In Unison: Loving God, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whose path of justice and inclusivity lights a path for all who follow him. May this tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in our hearts. In Jesus’ name. Amen.**

**Nativity scene**

**\*Hymn # 205 “Away in a Manger”**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Offering**

**Offertory "In the Bleak Mid Winter"**

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**We dedicate our lives and all that we have to the work of life, of love, of peace.  
Receive our gifts and lead us in wisdom and courage. Amen.**

**Homily**

**Communion**

**\*Commission and Blessing**

Take time, in the busy-ness of this season, for quiet reflection—

For the light of God’s love is discernible everywhere.

**We will let ourselves be surprised by wonder,**

**And set aside time to offer quiet thanks.**

The good news of Advent is this:

Christ is coming. Christ is always coming.

**We will welcome Christ into our hearts.**

**We will let ourselves be guided by his ministry.**

**We will go forth from this place in hope.**

**Hymn # 176 “Come, O Long-Expected Jesus”**

**Benediction**